

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 A-01

OPR-02 SY-10 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 AID-20 PC-15

RSR-01 NIC-01 NEA-10 IO-13 /180 W
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P 281605Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4924

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 3039

E.O. BLQY WC GDS

TAGS: ELAB, CS

SUBJECT: ELECTRICAL WORKERS' STRIKE STILL PENDING/PTTI REPRESENTATIVE REDUCES INVOLVEMENT IN DISPUTE
REF: SAN JOSE 3000, SAN JOSE 3021

1. THE THREATENED ELECTRICAL WORKERS' (SITET) STRIKE AGAINST THE COSTA RICAN ELECTRICITY INSTITUTE (ICE) DID NOT COME OFF ON AUGUST 27 AS FEARED (REFERENCE 1). IN A LAST MINUTE DECISION, SITET BACKED OFF ITS STRIKE ULTIMATUM, APPARENTLY TO GIVE ITSELF MORE TIME TO COORDINATE STRIKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH WORKERS IN ALL ICE FACILITIES AND WITH ITS RIVAL UNION ASDEICE, WITH WHPKCH IT HAS NOW JOINED FORCES IN THE DISPUTE. THE SITUATION REMAINS TENSE AND THE ICE BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS SHOWN NO INCLINATION TO REINSTATE THE EIGHT WORKERS WHOSE DISMISSAL SPARKED THE DISPUTE. IN A CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER, THE LABOR MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR OF LABOR SAID BOTH SIDES ARE SO DEEPLY DUG IN THAT, "THINGS WILL HAVE TO COME APART BEFORE THEY CAN BE PUT BACK TOGETHER." WHILE THE TWO UNIONS HAVE SET NO NEW STRIKE DEADLINE, THE PTTI REPRESENTATIVE NOW PREDICTS THE FIRST PHASE OF THE PROGRESSIVE STRIKE WILL BEGIN THURSDAY.

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2. TY PTTI REPRESENTATIVE, LOU MOORE, INFORMED THE EMBASSY AUGUST 27 THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO PULL BACK FROM ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN THE DISPUTE AND WILL NO LONGER PARTICIPATE IN SITET'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH ICE, MEETINGS WITH THE LABOR MINISTER, OR THE PRESS. AS HIS REASON, MOORE CITED SITET'S EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION, TAKEN AGAINST HIS ADVICE, TO JOIN IN A VIRTUAL UNITED FRONT WITH ASDEICE, WHICH MOORE CONSIDERS TO BE A QUASI-COMPANY UNION NOW CONTROLLED BY LEFTISTS. HE SAID THAT THE TWO UNIONS HAVE JUST SIGNED AN AGREEMENT TO COORDINATE THEIR STRIKE STRATEGY BY ISSUING ALL THEIR PRESS STATEMENTS PERTAINING TO THE STRIKE THROUGH A JOINT COMMITTEE. MOORE SAID SINCE PTTI FROWNS ON ANY UNITED FRONT ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN A DEMOCRATIC UNION NOTUS SUPPORTING AND COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED UNIONS, HE FELT HE HAD TO DISENGAGE FROM HIS CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH SITET.

3. MOORE SAID THAT THE SITET LEADERS CLAIM TO BE AWARE OF THE PITFALLS OF SUCH AN ALLIANCE WITH ASDEICE, BUT TOLD HIM THAT THEY HAD NO CHOICE THAN TO JOIN FORCES BECAUSE ASDEICE, HAD A LARGE MEMBERSHIP IN ONE ICE INSTALLATION WHOSE SHUTDOWN WILL BE KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE STRIKE. DESPITE THEIR DISAGREEMENT.

MOORE SAID HE REMAINED ON GOOD TERMS WITH THE SITET LEADERS.

4. COMMENT: WITH MOORE'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE FIRING LINE, A DECISION HE SAID, THE MINISTRY OF LABOR IS AWARE OF, THE CHANCES THAT THE EMBASSY WILL BE SINGLED OUT FOR INSTIGATING THE DISPUTE MAY BE SOMEWHAT REDUCED, BUT NOT ELIMINATED.
VAKY

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